Additional Bogies for ladies in Local/ EMU trains

2922. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to add at least one more bogie exclusively for ladies in local/EMU trains and one first class bogie too, in order to augment the capacity of commuters and office goers;

(b) if so, by when; and

(c) if not the reasons therefore?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) However, augmentation of the load of trains is a continuous process on the Railways depending upon the traffic justification, availability of coaches and operational feasibility.

Inauguration of East Coast Railway Zone

2923. DR. M.N. DAS: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether out of the seven new Railway Zones created by the Ministry of Railways recently, the headquarters of the oldest Zone, namely East Coast Railways, was inaugurated by the then Prime Minister at Bhubaneswar on 8th August, 1996;

(b) if so, whether it was declared that the East Coast Railway Zone should be comprised of 3 divisions of S.E. Railway, viz. Khurda Road, Sambalpur and Vishakhapatnam; and

(c) if so, why no official notification has been issued so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Jurisdiction of the new Zone has not yet been finalised. Also, before an official notification is issued, certain important aspects, which includes infrastructural developments, are required to be completed. The Zones have been planned to be set up in a phased manner over a period of five years.

Customs and excise levies on imports by the Railways

2924. SHRI K.M. SAIFULLAH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways pay huge customs and excise levies on its imports;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken to persuade the Finance Ministry to remove the anomalies to attract private investment in Railway projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) and (b) The Indian Railways paid an amount of Rs. 420.41 crores approximately as custom duty on imports during 1998-99. No excise duty is leviable on imports.

(c) Does not arise.

Funds for development of Railway Zones in Andhra Pradesh

2925. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Andhra Pradesh Government has demanded more funds from Rail Budget for development of Railway Zones touching that State;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) and (b) Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh in a recent letter has requested additional funds for the following projects:

(i) Secundrabad-Nizamabad-Mudkhed-Jankampet-Bodhan-Gauge Conversion

(ii) Katpadi-Pakala-Gauge Conversion

(iii) Dharamavaram-Pakala-Gauge Conversion

(iv) Pendekallu-Gooty by pass line

(v) Paddapalli-Karimnager-Nizamabad-New line

(vi) Nandyal-Yerragunta-New line

(vii) Munirabad-Mahaboobnager-New line

(viii) Kakinada-Kotapalli-Restoration of Dismantled line

(ix) Kakinada-Pithapuram-New line

(x) Road Overbridges & Road Under bridges in South Central Railway

(c) Funds have been allotted in the 1999-2000 budget depending upon the over all availability of resources and taking into consideration the priority of the individual projects.

Zonal Training Schools/Colleges of the Railways

2926. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) how many Zonal training schools/colleges are in Railways throughout the country;

(b) whether the Railway Board had agreed in principle for setting up a new Zonal training school at Guwahati for the N.F. Railway on 19th November, 1990; if so, whether site for the institute had been selected tentatively;

(c) if so, why is it delayed in implementation; and

(d) whether the Ministry of Railways would take necessary action to set up this institution in the near future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) There are nine Zonal Training Centres in Indian Railways throughout the country.

(b) to (d) In 1990, it had been decided in principle, for setting up a modern training institute in Guwahati for training the staff of Northeast Frontier Railway. The new training centre has been set up at Guwahati. This provides training to Signal & Telecommunication staff of Northeast Frontier Railway.

Deterioration in Railway Catering Services

2927. SHRIMATI BASANTI SARMA:
SHRI ANANTA SETHI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of deteriorating of catering services in Rajdhani Express trains;

(b) whether catering services in long distance trains are also far below the standards and satisfaction;

(c) if so, the reasons for poor catering services and deterioration therein;

(d) whether Government have any proposal to improve catering services in the Railways; and

(e) if so, the details of steps taken in that regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) Improvement in catering services is an ongoing process. This includes maintenance of hygiene, standard and quality of food services, introduction of good quality packaging-biodegradable material,, revision of menus, procurement of raw material from the approved sources etc. Regular/surprise checks are conducted by the railway administration to monitor the catering services and remedial action is taken.